

PERSONNEL INSIGHTS

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Comments From Our Technical Director:

It has been six months since FOC and we are shifting our focus from deployment to getting back to basics of filling positions. Since April of this year, we've had an aggressive training schedule offering everything from a 2-week basic staffing course to workshops in intermediate pay setting, merit promotion, NAF portability, Veterans' Preference and Advanced Job Analysis and Template Development. Our fully trained instructor core, which we refer to as the Palace Compass Academy, has taught these classes. Our plan in the near term is to also train all newcomers in an intensive 6-8 week training program, which will include both classroom training and hands-on practical application training, before they are placed on a servicing team. Our staffs, along with seven PACAF CPFs, are conducting Phase I testing of the civilian Virtual In Processing (cVIP) program whereby employees can complete required documents over the web. We will have more information in the near term to share once we complete Phase II testing at Langley and Petersen AFBs. We hope to have cVIP ready to place in full production o/a 1 Nov 02.

There are some areas in this edition we want to highlight to your staffs. The first is the D2D conversion, which consolidated payroll servicing by agency and requires the use of the new code on all new position builds. We also have learned a few things about Modern and the suspense reports available to you in Business Objects that we want to share with your staffs.

The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams.
Eleanor Roosevelt

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Qualification Requirements for RIF Assignment

Determination of Qualifications requirements for assignments is the most contentious part of the RIF. It is only human nature for impacted employees to believe that they qualify for all positions (or can be trained to do them) when they are facing a change to lower grade or separation in RIF. On the other hand, it is also human nature for managers and commanders to resent either having their employees displaced or their vacant positions filled by mandatory placement. It's a lot like balancing a scale to come up with the right decision. As a result, the RIF unit takes a very close look at qualifications before they determine an employee is "fully qualified" for a RIF placement.

To have an assignment right in RIF an employee must be "fully qualified" for the position. This means the employee's experience must exceed the standards we set for "basic eligibility" and even "best qualified" for merit promotion consideration. In RIF, the employee's past experience must provide clear evidence that he/she has the capacity, adaptability, and any special skills required to successfully perform the duties and responsibilities of the position without "undue interruption" to the work program. That means they must be able to perform all critical requirements of the job taking in account the pressures of deadlines, priorities and other demands of the organization without loss of quality or

production to the organization. Usually, if the individual cannot perform these duties within a period of 90 days, the organization would be unduly interrupted.

We also consider "undue interruption" in determining qualification for vacancies. The only difference is an extension of the 90-day standard. The RIF candidate still needs to have experience in his/her background that shows the capability to perform all the critical elements of the position; but for a vacancy, we usually extend the amount of time the RIF candidate has before the organization in unduly interrupted. How long we extend it is usually determined by the criticality of the position and/or management's willingness to accept the person (and the interruption).

The undue interruption rule does not apply when placing individuals into vacancies (at their current grade or lower) through either waiver of qualifications, or when making management reassignments. Therefore, we can still get an impacted employee on to a vacant position even when they do not "fully qualify," providing management and the CPF concurs with the placement.



How to Deliver RIF Notices

Delivering RIF notices is not a simple task. It is also very stressful for both the person making the delivery and the employee getting the notice. However, it's a required part of the RIF process, which notifies affected employees of their RIF status and provides them with basic information about pay and benefits associated with the RIF. It is also the first time the employee received face-to-face information about the RIF and their opportunity to respond, sometimes emotionally. If the delivery goes badly, the less confidence the employee will have in the entire RIF process, and the greater the likelihood of congressional inquiries, grievances and appeals. You need to have a plan in place before delivering a RIF notice. Here are some recommended "Dos and Don'ts" to follow in developing your plan. Additional guidance on RIF notices delivery is contained in OPM Restructure Handbook Module 2, Unit B, Sec 2, and Para 32.

DOs:

- Decide who will deliver the notices. Ideally, a management official (supervisor, department head, commander) should deliver them to their impacted employees, with a personnel representative on hand.
- Notify union(s) when you deliver notices to employees. You will want to work closely with your labor relations expert on precisely when and how to notify the union officials.
- If the notice contains a position offer, send a copy to the organization where the employee will be placed
- Deliver notices in person whenever possible. If not possible (where employees are on extended sick leave, long term training, etc.), mail the notices by registered mail with a return receipt requested.
- Deliver all notices as quickly as possible (preferably all in one day). Once you start, the word will be out and it will be very stressful for impacted employees until they get their notice.
- When you deliver the notice, be direct and compassionate, conveying information in a respectful, businesslike manner. Maintain eye contact with the recipient.
- Take time to listen attentively. Some will want to have their say, so let them talk. Listen... don't react.
- Treat employees with dignity and compassion
- Encourage each employee to carefully review the pay and benefits information provided and to contact the local POC in the CPF if they have questions

- Inform employees of next steps in the RIF process, including using outplacement, access to workspace, and the exit process
- Tell them whom they can contact if they want to review RIF records, regulations or retention registers
- Plan ahead for rumor control. Be clear what information is private and what is public. Deal with rumors openly and promptly.
- Ask employee to sign copy of notice, acknowledging receipt--if employee refuses, note date of delivery
- Return all acknowledgement copies of the RIF notices to the AFPC RIF Unit

DON'Ts:

- Argue with employees, or further justify the employee's assignment or separation
- Don't try to respond to every question that is asked. Tell the employee they can set up a meeting with the POC in the CPF to get specific information about the RIF.
- Don't apologize for the RIF
- Imply the decision for the RIF is not final
- Become impatient
- Imply you disagree with the RIF actions.
- Blame others for the RIF decisions (e.g., decision on your assignment was made by AFPC)
- Discuss the RIF placement of other individuals
- Issue RIF notices of separation during the period of 15 December to 3 January

Payroll Regeneration

We at AFPC/DPCT frequently get requests to reflow actions under Modern. Reflowing was a Legacy action. Under Modern, we can regenerate (retransmit) actions, but only under limited authority from CPMS. If the CPMS-approved workaround says to regenerate (e.g., award for employee who has already separated under Modern), or if a PAYNEW/PYREJ was not fixed within 4 weeks, we can regenerate that action. Otherwise, we shouldn't be doing a regeneration.

Many times, we get a request to regenerate from the CPF when the problem is the Activity Code/Org Structure combination not existing at DCPS. In that case, regeneration won't help - the regenerated action would simply go through the same electronic "limbo" as the first PAY500. Except for actions where the PAYNEW/PYREJ was not fixed within 4 weeks, there is no point in regenerating an action unless we make some sort of change (e.g., went to Payroll Office ID [POID])

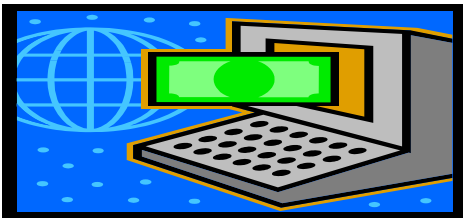
PE, should have gone to POID DE). If we regenerate something without making a change to the PAY500, the same problem will reoccur.

Benefits Problems with Transfers

If an employee transfers to your CPF and has problems with FEHB/FEGLI/TSP deductions not resuming or are incorrect, please contact your servicing staffer. These items would have been input by the staffer as part of the appointment/conversion (1XX/5XX) action and should not be referred to BEST. See AFPC Procedures Guide, Chapter 14, 2.b.6 (Full Serviced Procedures).

DCPS Database Cleanup

As part of the reorganization and consolidation of DCPS, AFPC/DPCT has been doing a lot of clean up. DCPS is often the first to be aware that an employee has left and gone to another agency. We may be contacting you for assistance in obtaining a pick-up SF 50 or verifying a departure date, so that we may properly end date the employee's record in Modern.



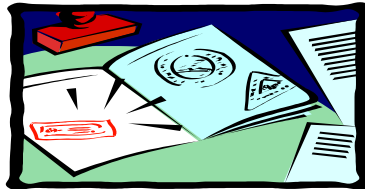
D2D Conversion

As you probably already know, DFAS is consolidating payroll servicing by agency. Except for Air Force employees in foreign countries, all of Air Force will be paid out of Defense Civilian Payroll System (DCPS), Pensacola. DFAS gradually merged all of the records into the DE database. The PE records were moved 14 July, the OM records were moved 28 July, and the CH records were moved on 11 August. Air Force employees serviced by CPFs in foreign countries will continue to be paid by DCPS Charleston (FF database). Modern will

take care of revising the payroll office code (e.g., PE to DE, effective 14 July) on all existing RPAs, as of the date of the payroll office change. New position builds, created after the date of the payroll office change should have the new code. So, for Air Force, no new PE positions created 14 July or later, no new OM positions created 28 July or later, and no new CH positions created 11 August or later. Non-Air Force positions will be paid out of the DCPS that handles the owning (e.g. Army, Navy) agency, even if an Air Force CPF does personnel servicing.

Servicing by MAJCOM

On 1 August, AFPC/DPCT completed its reorganization by MAJCOM to serve you better. The "Central" Region (DPCC) services AETC. The "Eastern" Region (DPCE) services AFRC and AMC. The "Southern" Region services AFMC, ANG and USAFA. The "Western" Region services ACC and AFSPC. "PACAF" (DPCTD) continues to service PACAF. This has resulted in some personnel movements and assignment changes. We're happy to have this opportunity to improve our servicing.



INS Form I-9 and Citizenship

The INS Form I-9 is used by employers and the INS to verify that employees are eligible to work in the United States. Did you know Air Force policy is that I-9s should also be used to verify US citizenship? With a few exceptions (all in the excepted service), all appropriated fund employees must be US citizens or US nationals (born in American Samoa, including Swains Island). By requiring the CPF to use certain documents on the I-9 form for US citizen/national appointees, one form can accomplish both purposes. Selectees can prove citizenship in two ways. The first is to provide List A document 1, 2, or 3 that proves citizenship (US Passport, Certificate of US Citizenship, or Certificate of Naturalization). The second is to provide a List B document issued by a government agency with a picture to verify the employee is the person named in the List C

document, AND List C document 2, 3, 5, or 6 that proves citizenship (Certification of Birth Abroad, Birth Certificate issued in the US, US Citizen ID Card, or ID Card for Resident Citizen in US).

That's why your servicing staffer may talk to you about which documents are/will be used on the I-9. We have had I-9s verified with a birth certificate or Social Security Card from foreign countries, and when questioned, the CPF says "But the form says you can't specify which documents we accept." The form does specify which forms we can accept for updating and reverification purposes, not for initial verification. The AF policy on using I-9s for citizenship verification was issued in HQ USAF WASHDC//DPC// msg 241315Z SEP 87 and HQ USAF/DPCS ltr dtd 28 March 1989, Documentation and Verification of Citizenship.

I-9s completed by non-citizen/national selectees (for those few excepted service appropriated positions that can be filled by a foreign national) do not have to use any specific documents beyond those required by the I-9 itself. Since you are not verifying US citizenship for these employees, to require specific documents could be considered an unfair immigration-related employment practice. CPFs in foreign countries don't use the I-9 (since there's no need to verify eligibility to work in the US if you're outside the US) but still verify US citizenship [for appropriated fund positions designated to be filled by a US employee] through local procedures.



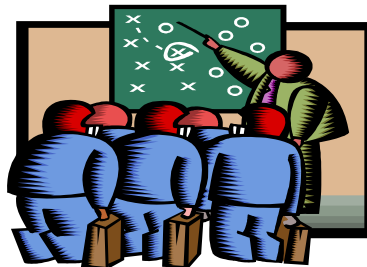
Appointing Officer Responsibilities

Did you ever wonder why your AFPC servicing staffer asks you for documents on a selectee, even though you (or someone else at the CPF) filled the job (e.g., summer hire program, SEU cert)? It's because the staffer at AFPC has to update HR, which means electronically signing the SF 50.

What's so significant about "signing the SF 50?" The person who signs the SF 50 (the "appointing officer" in OPM parlance) is responsible for ensuring each

personnel action signed meets all legal and regulatory requirements. That includes approving determinations made by other personnelists in the areas of qualifications (education and experience), pay, veterans' preference and suitability. Plus, by requiring the necessary documents, the staffer can include them in the InProcessing file. From there, OPF Management puts them into the electronic OPF. Providing those documents will also ensure they are available when Air Force does an inspection.

For more information on the responsibilities of the appointing officer, see the Guide to Processing Personnel Actions (GPPA) [also known as the old 296-33], Chapter 3, Paragraph 1-4c.



Extension of Emergency Hiring Flexibilities

OPM has announced the extension of four emergency hiring flexibilities (granted as a result of 9-11) that were to expire on 30 September 2002. The flexibilities and a short synopsis of the extension guidance follows:

1 - Emergency temporary appointments under Schedule A 213.3102(i)(3):

Extension guidance: This authority has been extended for the duration of the state of national emergency. You can continue to make temporary emergency appointments NTE 1 year in support of Operations NOBLE EAGLE and ENDURING FREEDOM until the President or Congress terminates the emergency. In addition, you may extend appointments made under this authority for up to 1 additional year (total NTE 2 years). If you have a continuing need beyond the 2-year limit, the employee must be converted to another excepted or competitive service appointment. In rare and unusual circumstances, you may request a brief extension from

OPM (thru your MAJCOM and Air Staff) to the two-year limit.

2 - SES Limited Emergency Appointments:

Extension Guidance: The Office of Executive Resources Management (OERM) will continue to process immediately agency requests for limited appointments of individuals who do not have career or career conditional status to positions established to deal with the national emergency.

3 - Salary Offset (Dual compensation reduction waivers) to Reemployed Annuitants:

Extension Guidance: Delegated authority to waive the dual compensation reductions has been extended an additional year. Total employment for an annuitant under a waiver may not exceed 2 years. You should contact your MAJCOM for additional guidance related to the use of these waivers within your command.

4 - VSIP Buyout Repayment Waivers:

Extension Guidance: OPM granted waiver authority to DoD to waive VSIP buyout waivers for individuals appointed to temporary appointments in support of the 9-11 emergency. This waiver authority was to expire on September 30, 2002. The waiver authority has been extended for the duration of the state of emergency. You may continue to grant waivers for individuals hired on temporary appointments (NTE 1 year) on positions in support of Operations NOBLE EAGLE or ENDURING FREEDOM until notified that the emergency has been terminated. Individuals given waivers may also be extended an additional year (NTE a total of 2 years).

You should contact your MAJCOM for additional guidance related to the use of these waivers within your command.

Suspense Reports

Many CPFs have commented on the lack of RIPs (Reports on Individual Person) in Modern. It's true that RIPs ended when Legacy did; however, Plans & Programs Division (DPCX) has written many Business Objects reports to replace RIPs. Also, you can use CSU to generate a suspense report that may help you to see what's coming up (or even already overdue) for your CPF. How? Go into CSU, hit the Reports button and select Suspense Action Report. For Items, select the Submitting Office ID (e.g., 9H) you need. For Sort, select the sort you prefer (usually Name), putting 1 under Sequence (Seq) in that row and X in the Ascending (Asc) column of that row. Say OK, then hit Process. You will get two fields to enter the "To" and "From" dates (e.g., 01-JUL-2002, 31-JUL-2002). CSU will issue a report covering Staffing (temp & term appt, temp prom, detail, ret grd expire, etc.), Admin (WGLs, probations, career tenure, overseas tour expirations, etc.), and EMR (LWOP, FEHB). This way, you'll know which employees have approaching appointment NTE dates, without a "RIP" generating.

Quick Info

Did You Know You Can Register on line for Career Programs?

<http://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/cp>

Services Directory

AFPC Civilian Employment Internet Addresses

Civilian Employment Home Page: <https://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/afjobs/>

Directorate of Civilian Personnel Home Page: <http://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/dpc>

Office of Personnel Management (OPM)

Home Page - <http://www.opm.gov>

Human Resources References - <http://www.opm.gov/references/>

USAJobs - <http://www.usajobs.opm.gov>

Veterans - <http://www.opm.gov/veterans/>

VetGuide/VetsInfo Guide - <http://www.opm.gov/veterans/index.htm>

People With Disabilities - <http://www.opm.gov/disability/>

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